

BOSTON COLLEGE**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2016**

1. PRESENT

Mr P Copley (Chair), Mr S Brown, Mr R Dalton, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mr G Harrison, Mr S McCracken, Prof J Mitchell, Mrs A Mosek, Mr C Pett, Mr P Scarlett, Mr G Tawton, Mr B Webb and Mr N Worth

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development), Mrs F Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality), Miss S Hill (International Office Manager) (for item 5e only), Mr K Tharby (Director of Workforce Development) and Mrs J Webb (Minute Taker)

Meeting attendance: 87%

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr A Atkins and Mrs H Wright

2. MEMBERSHIP

Janet Hemmant advised Members that the Search and Governance Committee had considered the potential reappointment of Helen Wright and agreed to recommend this since she is a very valuable member of the Corporation and has played a particularly important role in both the Standards Committee and the collaboration discussions. Members agreed to renew her membership for a four year term commencing immediately after the expiry of the last term.

Janet Hemmant advised Members that the application received from Helen Mather had been recommended for appointment by the Search and Governance Committee and her CV had been circulated to the Board prior to today's meeting. Following discussion it was agreed that Helen Mather's appointment for a four year term be approved effective from the 14 December 2016 Corporation meeting.

Janet Hemmant informed Members that the vacancy for a staff governor had resulted in one applicant being submitted for consideration for appointment. Details of the staff member, Stephen Crozier were shared and Members agreed that any potential conflict of interest with other roles which he holds should be clarified during the induction process. Stephen Crozier was duly appointed with effect from the 14 December 2016 Corporation meeting for a term ending at the same date as that of the existing staff governor.

Janet Hemmant reminded Members that there are vacancies on some Committees waiting to be filled, however it is anticipated that the two newly appointed Governors may be willing to take up membership of these.

Steve McCracken reminded Members that George Harrison had previously expressed an interest in joining the Finance & Resources Committee but there were no vacancies at the time. Following discussion it was agreed that George could attend the Finance & Resources Committee as an Observer which means that he will be able to participate in the meetings but not vote on any decision taken.

3. **REVIEW OF ACTION LOG**

Members reviewed the Action Log from the previous meeting.

Janet Hemmant said that she was still pursuing a meeting date with the landlord of the redundant premises in Skegness.

4. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

a) Corporation – 29 June 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2016 were reviewed and noted.

b) Search & Governance Committee – 20 July 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 July 2016 were reviewed and noted.

c) Search & Governance Committee – 26 September 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2016 were reviewed and noted.

d) Finance & Resources Committee – 20 June 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 June 2016 were reviewed and noted.

e) Finance & Resources Committee – 26 September 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2016 were reviewed and noted.

f) Audit Committee – 23 June 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June 2016 were reviewed and noted.

5. **REPORTS**

a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda Mosek drew Members' attention to a number of points, namely:

- Post 16 Skills Plan – Amanda outlined the key points from the post 16 skills plan and the implications for colleges.
- Area Reviews – Amanda outlined the process involved in area reviews. Feedback was given in detail from the first meeting held on 3 October and the visit to the College on 10 October. A discussion took place regarding the visit and points which had come out of it about governance, how it was managed and what course of action should be taken in response.

- Apprenticeship Changes – Changes are creating both a potential opportunity and threat for the College. The College is currently awaiting the result of the funding consultation and it is anticipated that there may be implications for sub-contracting.

b) College Leadership Business Plan

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda Mosek expressed her thanks to the Strategic Planning Group who had helped devise the new strategic plan. A copy of the Plan for the period 2017-20 was circulated and is also available on the Internet.

Amanda informed Members that the new Leadership & Management Business Plan will be presented to the Board at their December meeting.

c) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on the anticipated 2015-16 accounts.

Janet Hemmant informed Members that the Auditors are in College carrying out the accounts audit. Headline figures from the accounts were shared. Members discussed the poor pension valuation figures and agreed that it was a national problem and not College specific.

Nick Worth sought clarification on the categories within the Risk Register. Janet Hemmant explained how the gradings are devised and applied in the Register. Steve McCracken commented that perhaps in light of the recent experience during Area Review that it might also be prudent to add a governance risk to the register.

d) Property

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant gave an update on current property matters:

- Sam Newsom Centre

Janet Hemmant advised that the refurbishment works were proving to be quite challenging and more costly than anticipated. Members noted however that it would have been far more expensive to have built a new centre and the College would not have such an outstanding building in their property portfolio. Works are continuing and it is anticipated that Music learners will be in residence after an extended half term. Performing Arts students will move into the building at a later date. Fiona Grady responded to a question enquiring how the disruption had been affecting learners and said that the learners are currently using Blackfriars Theatre and, although there is no IT provision there, staff are being quite ingenious in their teaching practices and are keeping learners on track.

- Skirbeck Road Land

Following a discussion at the Finance & Resources Committee it had been suggested that it was preferable to develop the land at Muster Roll Lane as opposed to purchasing new land for parking. Following discussion this was agreed to be the more cost viable option.

- EMAT Centre

The LEP has included this project in an application for government funding. It is hoped that the Autumn Statement will determine whether this is likely to be funded and the College should know the definite outcome by Easter 2017. The College had also submitted a bid to the Coastal Communities for this which has now been turned down.

- Construction

Negotiations are ongoing regarding the small plot of land at the rear of Construction which would assist with the provision of extra workshop space.

As an interim solution to the lack of space in construction a building on the Docks is being looked at which could be used for Brickwork.

- RLQ

Janet Hemmant said a meeting has been scheduled with the potential tenant over half term week and she will feedback on this in due course.

e) International

Members received a report from the Business Development Manager supported by the International Office Manager.

Paul Collins gave an overview of his report and explained the challenges the College is experiencing in the recruitment of overseas students. A number of issues have impacted on the decline. He gave feedback from agents with whom he had met who have said that the Brexit vote and videos available on YouTube showing negative comments on the area, together with the security issues on mainland Europe had led to parents being reluctant to send their sons/daughters to Europe. Chris Pett enquired whether the devaluation of the pound had also had some impact. Paul Collins replied saying that agents would obviously earn less however Boston College is still comparatively competitive compared to other institutions. Paul said that the College is now looking at recruiting in previously untried markets and it is hoped that this will be a positive move.

Steve McCracken asked that it be noted that the report was very well presented and informative.

f) Collaboration Update

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Quality & Standards.

Fiona Grady gave an update on developments and how specific groups were moving forward. She said the Procurement Group had identified a number of potential savings across the Colleges and these were being explored further. The Apprentice Assessment Centre Group had met on the 6 October when both she and Paul Collins had attended and feedback was given.

With regard to Trio Training, a Manager is being recruited and interviews will take place shortly. Phil Scarlett asked that when the Business Plan is available for the apprenticeship company that it be shared with all Governors.

g) Governance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant asked Members to note performance of the Corporation and Finance and Resources Committee for 2015-16 and to consider the targets for the forthcoming year. Following discussion, Corporation targets were agreed as:

- 75% attendance including development days
- All governors to make at least one curriculum visit during the year
- Oversight of the quality of teaching learning and assessment
- Progress collaboration options and more efficient working in the light of the government agenda
- Further improve overall College achievement data
- Maintain a £1 million cash reserve

Janet Hemmant drew Members attention to the targets proposed by the Finance and Resources Committee and these were agreed.

Janet informed Members that the Search and Governance Committee was proposing to make changes to its constitution to recognise the extension of its remit into governance as it is not currently included. The changes proposed by the Committee were approved.

Members discussed whether the option to make decisions outside of meetings as proposed by the Search and Governance Committee should be extended to other committees. It was agreed that this should be added to the Procedures of all committees other than the Remuneration Committee.

Janet informed Members that the Search and Governance Committee had reviewed the Scheme of Delegation and were seeking Corporation's views on its adoption. It was agreed that the scheme should be adopted.

Members reviewed the list of confidential papers for 2015-16 and discussed whether they could be released into the public domain. It was agreed to release Finance and Resources Committee property papers from September 2015, HR reports to the Corporation in October 2015 and

Finance and Resources Committee in January 2016 and June 2016 with the exception of sections referring to individual staff members.

A discussion took place regarding whether the Corporation were satisfied with the existing arrangements regarding the decision making processes. Nick Worth commented that he thought there were times between meetings when urgent decisions needed to be made. Janet Hemmant assured him that if this was the case an extra-ordinary meeting would be, and has in the past, been called.

h) Human Resources Annual Report

Members received a report from the Director of Workforce Development.

Keith Tharby gave an overview of the year end position and drew Members attention to a number of points:

- Long term sickness absences had increased slightly as there had been an unprecedented number of operations/serious illnesses. However short term absences had decreased. Close monitoring is being carried out by Managers and this has had a positive impact.
- Staff utilisation remains at a high level.
- Staff profile has shown that the College has increased its recruitment to 'white other' for the second year in a row.
- Staff turnover has increased which is disappointing but on a par nationally.
- Changes to sick pay has had a positive effect and as new staff are recruited they will be on the new terms and conditions of employment.
- The College has retained its Health and Safety Quality Mark and provision is now carried out internally.
- Accidents reported have reduced and there were no RIDOR reportable accidents.

Peter Copley asked that it be noted to be a comprehensive and good report.

i) 'A' Level & GCSE Results 2015/16

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality.

Fiona Grady informed Members that her report would normally have been taken to Standards Committee however she wished to draw the Board's attention to the A/AS level achievement rates and the GCSE English and maths results. She explained that good achievement and high grade rates at A level are needed to increase the College's market share of 16-18 year olds and to recruit international learners. She reminded them that she had drawn attention to the anticipated low level of achievements in English and

maths previously and this was not a College specific issue but was the same position in virtually all other colleges in the country. The A level results were very pleasing with the 100% pass rate and 99% achievement rate. Fiona gave a breakdown of data and said that the College was now looking at further improving the situation with action plans in place which will be detailed in the College QIP and Governors will receive a copy as soon as they have been validated.

6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

An HR issue pertaining to a specific member of staff was scheduled for discussion. Student governors withdrew from the meeting whilst other Members discussed whether they should be withdrawn from the whole of this discussion. It was agreed that they should not be asked to withdraw however it was noted that in accordance with the requirements of the Instrument of Governance they would not be able to contribute to the discussions.

The student members re-joined the meeting.

The issue in question was discussed at length and questions were raised as to how the situation had arisen and been managed, the quality of the external advice given and subsequent arrangements made. Members sought assurance that the situation would not arise again and procedures and process have been vigorously reviewed and updated. Keith Tharby confirmed that this was the case.

7 **DIARY DATES**

It was noted that the next meetings of the Corporation would take place as follows:

Corporation	14 December 2016	4.00 pm	PPPC
CPD/Planning	03 March 2017	9.00 am	BCUC, Medlock
Corporation	03 March 2017	2.00 pm	BCUC, Medlock
Corporation	10 May 2017	4.00 pm	RLQ, Spalding
Corporation	05 July 2017	4.00 pm	BCUC, Medlock